

think tank  
for human  
beings in  
general

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p o e m s

jordan castro // richard wehrenberg jr

richard wehrenberg jr // jordan castro





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## jordan castro

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a list of things i am going to do

animal lamp sorrow

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victory

assessing myself

at a high frequency, in a  
negative/ineffective manner

this morning i worried about my  
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## richard wehrenberg jr

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what 'achieving minor celebrity  
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think tank for human beings  
in general

j o r d a n

c a s t r o

# a list of things i am going to do

i am going to rip a bone out of my leg and play it like an instrument, producing a sound like the one that windows make when a train rolls by

i am going to shave my moustache and take the little hairs out of my sink with a damp kleenex and glue them all together to spell 'EVERYBODY EVER'

i am going to cut my ears off with the pliers of hope

i am going to gauge my eyes with the broken screwdriver of luck and chance

i am going to pull my tongue and teeth out with my bare hands, and feel surprised - as if this wasn't already a daily occurrence

i am going to hear no evil, see no evil, speak no evil

bitches...

i am going to glue my newly assembled moustache back on with "super-glue" that will prove to be D grade in quality and highly ineffective as time elapses and as my real one starts to grow back

i am going to sneak to my downstairs bathroom while you are asleep, so you don't hear the noises i make when i poop

i am going to drink until i throw up and then drink more because i can and because i have enough alcohol and because it seems okay

i am going to call somebody i do not know and say "andy, i hate you." and they will say "this is not andy, this is julia roberts. i think you have the wrong number" and i will say "i am sorry. i have always done better with concepts than with names and details."

i am going to remember "that one time when..." with a sense of vague longing and then i am going to think about the implications of that memory and stab my brain with a sharp loaf of bread

"julia roberts, i hate you."

i am going to become increasingly self-absorbed and call myself an "existentialist"

and you will look confused

and i will say "we are confused."

and you will look more confused

and i will say "it is okay."

and we will say "it is okay."

i am going to smile and jump around and produce amazing kittens that will fall from my butt hole and run away and then i am going to contemplate suicide and fall asleep with a half-empty bottle of whiskey in my hand, because it is impossible to feel any other way than these two ways ever

i am going to be amazing and free and happy once i decide to be

i honestly feel like i am capable of doing something amazing

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# animal lamp sorrow

screaming mad boredom

sorrow that is beyond opinion and  
without 'concrete reasoning'

eyes, like leaky faucets

"excuse me's" in a high-school hallway  
filled with out of control gay retards  
'on' codeine

the lifespan of a cloud is, on average, 15 minutes long

the narrative feels written  
predetermined  
dead upon conception

to know what comes next is to  
kill the 'life within life'

i am describing my immediate surroundings and  
feelings, because that is all  
there is

*lamp*

*animal sorrow*

i realize that i am not describing my "actual" surroundings or  
feelings, but that i am describing my perception of these things,  
which, depending on your worldview,  
could theoretically be what  
is "actual"



seems like i am feeling legitimate defeat

poetry seems bleak

extreme bored feelings creating negative thought processes  
in my brain like, "nothing really matters" and  
"this poem is retarded"

feels like i am from a suburb of 'cognitive dissonance' called  
'vague city'

[something]

'tired of life'

# weak

i have come close to sucking my own dick  
but have inevitably failed  
every time

one gets so close, and then the pain sets in

it is like a kind of sharp spoon or something  
digging into your back

trying to scoop out something that is not there to be found

"if only my dick were an inch longer," i have thought

but it is of no use

i have practiced stretching and i have read fiction books  
about people who have allegedly done it,  
but a book is not what is or was

a book is just a story

and so now i try to persuade other people to suck my dick  
or give me a kiss  
or sit with me  
or talk with me  
or walk with me  
or something

and i do this while knowing that  
all relationships are, to some degree, a power struggle

and that the power gets moved around from time to time  
is what keeps things going.

an example of this would be how tonight  
i wanted to see you so badly

but you had other plans with other people  
or something.

i have tried thrusting my penis into the dirty cunt of power  
and tearing it to shreds

but my penis was not large enough.

i have tried giving a piece of my penis to everyone,  
so as not to be discriminatory or  
hierarchical or  
something

but my penis was not strong enough.

'is my penis inadequate'

'who will nurture an inadequate penis like mine'

# haiku

i don't get enough  
external validation  
on the internet

# rhetorical questions to [ ]

what happens when you feel no desire to participate in physical reality  
what happens when you stare at a computer screen for 8-10 hours a day

i feel like i am alienating myself  
from myself

or something

i am looking at a computer

and typing words onto a screen

where is the internet

when i find the internet, can i poke it  
will it laugh

i feel alienated by trees

is the grass mocking me

where are my real-life friends

will the internet hug me

# victory

are there animals who have defense mechanisms against  
loneliness and alienation  
who do not impose things like loneliness and alienation on others  
in order to feel better

is subjecting millions of people to starvation and poverty  
an okay method of dealing with personal insecurities

i want to lie down

under 50,000 blankets and 2,000,000 pillows

i 'just' want to 'lie the fuck' 'down'

# assessing myself at a high frequency, in a negative / ineffective manner

needlessness is not a feeling,  
it is a state of being

confusion seems at an 'all time high'

feels like there has to be directions for  
something like this

like a sign (the ones you see  
in the mall) stating,  
"you are here"

that i can reference when i need to find  
a bathroom or something

seems like i don't feel anything anymore

(except for the occasional  
increased or decreased heart-rate,  
depending on my 'e-mail /  
stat counter situation')

and i cannot tell if this matters

have i 'completely forgotten' how to interact?

why is there not a 'self-help' book for people who have forgotten what  
the phrase "how are you" means?

i can feel the sky falling into me

and there is nothing  
left,

except for

**Jordan Castro** b. 1992 - ????

# this morning i worried about my face, among other things

you use the word 'beautiful' to describe things

and i derive meaning by connecting things in my brain with other things in my brain.

it feels important to read ~6 or 7 non-fiction books per year  
about like, the atrocities of power or man or world war two or something,  
in order to have a more encompassing range of things in your brain  
to connect with other things in your brain.

you think i am ugly because of something someone has taught you

i feel worried and anxious and depressed because of something  
in my brain connecting with something else in my brain,  
which is not my brain, but is chunks of

your brain, adolf hitler's brain, gene simmons' brain,  
albert einstein's brain,  
et. al.

while listening to a song by the mountain goats today, i felt  
overcome with 'beauty' and i felt a tear on my face

doing schoolwork can relieve depression and  
today i felt less lonely because of  
the square root of two 'over' two  
being the sin of the radian  
pi 'over' four

being able to dominate abstract mathematical hierarchies gives  
purpose to my life

what am i doing

drinking an iced soy latte



# head cold blues

i feel unable to produce anything  
besides snot

i keep thinking about my  
'input : output' ratio

my head feels like the exoskeleton of  
a beetle or something

can anybody tell me an efficient way  
to give more than i take?

i want to have an enormous garden with radishes  
and cucumbers and zucchini and  
yellow squash and red peppers and  
green peppers and  
soy beans

i can't stop wondering if the word spelled c-h-i-t-i-n is pronounced  
"chai-tin" or "shi-tin"

i want to dismantle every oppressive ideology  
inside of me and replace it with  
nothing

i feel like this cold is preventing me from  
thinking any 'complex depressing thoughts'  
about dietary habits or something, like  
— *the dominance sustained by humans over other animals*  
*'stems from' the same hierarchical tendencies as racism, sexism,*  
*and all other forms of inequality that capitalism superimposes on us,*  
*and is overall, 'harmful to humanity' by perpetuating a 'might makes right'*  
*mentality, an unsustainable lifestyle, and 'just' 'douchebitch ethics' 'in*  
*general'.*  
or something,  
and this feels good in my heart

tonight, i wanted to see you,  
but my physical state demanded that  
i rest

tonight, i will eat 'mint marble' soy ice cream with organic  
dark chocolate chips and sprinkles and  
hershey's chocolate syrup, and i will feel  
bad for not sharing this with anyone

and the fact that this will  
happen,  
to me,  
speaks wonders

about being, and meaning, and  
life, and existence  
or something

like, *all you have to do is care  
and the rest is soon to  
follow*

like, *theory into action into  
theory, etc...*

# last poem

i want to feel calm determination in a hoody

i want to seem outwardly, the way i feel inwardly  
after a cup of coffee or a 'good nights sleep'

i want to swallow a blue sky and exhale  
slowly, at ground level

i want to expand quietly together  
at a steady, familiar pace

we can absorb stars and small birds  
and internets

with a diet of dumpstered donuts and  
american spirits and  
iced soy lattes

we can dismantle our 'inner selves' and lie down  
in soft grass

gently

together

richard

wehrenberg

jr

# (still) claiming power over turnips

all these hands  
pushing off each other  
like factory farm fish  
like slave-ships  
packed to brim

there are real  
and invisible fences  
that separate us

i like you  
sitting in this room  
not saying much  
your lips wrestling  
each other like  
trying to get a pillow  
case on a pillow

i use coffee  
to offer my full self  
this wide eyed skeleton  
to those who want it

i see a man  
with papers  
using coffee  
getting ready  
to make money

huntington online banking  
asks me embarrassing questions  
like 'what was your first job'  
and 'who is your favorite author'  
to verify my identity

huntington online banking  
seems like an old friend  
who recognizes the bone  
structure of my face  
or the way i am walking  
down high street in columbus  
and asks me 'what high

school did you attend'  
cause now i have a mustache  
and am skinnier but  
'you look familiar though'

he looks me up and down  
and offers me a total  
balance of \$5.70

i am hugging my computer  
does my computer have eyes  
does my computer know  
i am claiming power over it

monsanto corporation  
is claiming power  
over soybeans

monsanto corporation hired  
forty five private investigators  
to ensure their continuous ability  
to claim power over soybeans

'unimpeded profit'

when i am eating vegetables  
i want my teeth to whisper  
little thank you's to them  
and send them forward  
through my body  
with grace and  
gratefulness

there should be self-esteem  
checkpoints and courtesy  
rest areas throughout  
the digestion process

i want turnips to understand  
i do not wish to  
claim power over them

responding with violence  
to a violent world does not

feel ok to me

i don't know

i feel like arguing abstract ideas  
or claiming existential crises  
or not enough coffee  
should be okay

if someone feels disappointed with you  
tell them they are thinking  
of a single version of you  
that they have developed  
overtime as the 'standard'  
and that 'no one can be  
the same person all the time'

regardless of what  
any self-help book  
or advice corner  
wants to say

# what 'achieving minor celebrity status' means

i am telling otto orf  
that tempeh is basically  
fermented soybeans  
as he is chewing  
curried cauliflower  
at a foodnotbombs serving

he says 'i achieved  
minor celebrity status  
up in cleveland  
as a soccer player'  
and throws his thumb  
over his shoulder, as if  
pointing to cleveland

i say 'cleveland crunch'

he says 'i can't  
give up my meat'

we allow silence

i imagine ellipses  
floating from his lips

he says 'so you are  
the spokesperson'

lisa says 'eh no.  
we don't have one  
really'

jen says  
'autonomous group'

greg says 'factory farms'

i am nodding  
but not too hard



otto is listening

i try to look at him  
'harder'

he has a ponytail  
and his arms  
are crossed

his face seems kind

he gives us five dollars  
and says 'if my wife comes back  
tell her i'm at the loft  
knocking back a few'  
and chuckles  
and looks around  
in such a way  
that implies  
a dense disconnection  
with his immediate environment

we understand this

he walks away

# excuse me

when i was younger i would say things like  
'i wish everybody had a video camera filming them  
so they could see how stupid they are'

'stupid' meaning  
we are hurting each other  
and it is difficult to see it

but if we need cameras  
to feel the weight of ourselves  
we will only feel  
less 'real'  
like untagging your name  
from facebook pictures  
or getting 'obliterated' every night,  
waking up with chunks missing  
from your pillow

we should sit in a room  
and not say anything

we should sit in a room  
and let pieces of the ceiling  
fall onto us, unflinchingly,  
as our faces strip off  
layers of themselves.

maybe,  
but if you want  
to go buy cigarettes  
i will probably make  
the walk with you.

excuse me

for all things

i think i want

# rhetorical questions to my dog

can i use your heart  
 and lungs and tail  
 to transform myself  
 into a wolf-man

do i own your heart  
 and lungs  
 and tail

do your organs  
 have intrinsic value

do you know you have been bought

have you seen the receipt  
 for forty two dollars  
 on the table

i keep looking at it  
 it just says 'dog' on it

makes sense though

# dumpster dive alone

i have been noticing sports figures  
from my former lives  
reoccurring in my life.

i have been accepting them wildly.

i have been saying 'oh its you again'

and opening doors  
and making them wipe  
their shoes on the welcome mat.

they appear at separate times,  
piling up and spilling  
over

they don't need anything.

they speak languages other than english  
to each other and worry me  
about things i don't usually worry about

like my push up count  
or how there's no electrolyte  
drinks in my fridge.

if they sleep  
i do not see it -  
they are awake  
before me.

today i have raised my push up  
count to fifty five and tonight i am going  
dumpster diving at aldi's with nolan ryan,  
scottie pippen, and otto orf.

they are wearing their uniforms  
and descending into trash

the night lights of back alleys  
spewing light on the numbers

34, 33, 00.

without our uniforms

do we know us

do we

# how cell phones ruin romantic poems

i was afraid

walking home  
in pitch black  
vagueness

trees bumping  
their oaked  
shoulders  
into mine

the moon  
following me  
like a security camera.

i opened  
my phone and read  
your number out  
loud nineteen times

thinking about the coincidence  
that is my supposed  
sex race and class  
my boxes

which will allow  
me to continue living  
pretty certainly  
and comfortably  
should i choose  
to follow their lead.

with no hit  
men after me  
no reason for  
elaborate plans  
to be made for  
my assassination  
no real reason not  
to not do anything

i sit down in the  
middle of the road  
trying to get hit on  
and with purpose.

but no,  
death for us  
run of the mill  
will be 'accidents'

it will be  
the lightning  
strike me  
the car metal  
pierce me.

and with your phone  
number memorized  
i will spend my last  
seconds saying  
something  
i hope i do not  
plan out  
to you.

though  
if at&t  
doesn't have service  
in the ditch  
or pothole  
i am dying in  
i guess this poem  
with all its faux  
romanticism  
means nothing  
once again.

# like matryoshka dolls

when you sigh  
your two front teeth  
flash like rats  
pausing on hind legs,  
frozen for that moment  
hands clamped around  
wire cage poles -

and i imagine us  
slinking through sewers  
furtive in our nothing  
wedged in our enclaves  
pulling our knees together  
peering over the horizon  
they create -

like matryoshka dolls  
we hide in each other

box inside  
box inside  
box, but

inside us  
there is stuff  
we carry around  
that 'ups' us,  
that floats us out  
of our wooden  
casket fates

and we evaporate  
all of us  
at the same time  
billions  
into single cloud

we hope so anyway



# snow-people easily identify the sun as their enemy

there are people  
crossing the street  
that look programmed

not like robots  
but like docile  
terminators  
or something

if they looked like  
'straight up robots'  
i think i would  
feel better.

i want  
to get beyond  
wanting

i want to make the noise  
a snowman makes  
as 'he/she/it' melts

i want to reorganize  
the hierarchy of 'he/she/it'  
to 'it/she/he' without  
seeming like it matters.

i want to transform  
into a snow-person  
for 'obvious reasons'

snow-people  
easily identify the sun  
as their enemy

as a snow-person i would  
hold my polar molecules tight  
and keep my carrot nose

and ice chin up if the sun  
tried to ruin me.

as a snow-person  
i could fight for 'things'

in my immediate reality  
i am sitting in a car  
perfectly able  
and aimlessly bored

thinking idly about  
'dismantling oppressive  
ideologies' and 'reducing  
pain and suffering in general'

all i can seem to say is  
'fuck' a lot of things

and feel inadequate  
and look at my face  
in the rear view mirror  
and make sarcastic  
facial expressions  
like 'looking really excited'  
then quickly switching to  
'looking really bored'

and 'everyone ever'  
seems hindered  
with a limited list of possible  
actions, lexicons, and  
facial expressions -

'is this all we will ever be'

'does it matter'

'what'

# think tank for human beings in general

this poem is an extinct volcano

once  
it exploded with lava-power  
now it does not want to

it is tired

it sits still  
wanting nothing really

just kind of there

excitement is over

looks 'cool' at least -

can there be  
a think tank for human beings in general

subjective truths seem boring

i am scared  
words are inadequate

this poem only references things

it is not the thing itself

is anything itself  
ever

this poem is a bee  
i found in the microwave  
and threw away -

decisions will be made after reading this poem

you will not just keep reading it

you will have to do something else

i will try to tell you something  
i am actually doing

hmmmmmm

**jordan castro**

[www.smokingonanemptystomach.blogspot.com](http://www.smokingonanemptystomach.blogspot.com)

[jordancastroisthepresident@gmail.com](mailto:jordancastroisthepresident@gmail.com)

**richard wehrenberg jr**

[www.simperingfool.blogspot.com](http://www.simperingfool.blogspot.com)

[richardwehrenbergjr@gmail.com](mailto:richardwehrenbergjr@gmail.com)



